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CRAYON DRAWING ON STONE.

WHILE the engraver, the etcher and the pen draughtsman have availed themselves of the lithographic stone with a high degree of success, it is under the hand of the crayonist that the discovery of Alois Senefelder has reached its loftiest artistic development. To a skilful draughtsman with the crayon, the stone offers the widest variety of possibilities. Extreme freedom on the one hand and the subtlest refinement of finish on the other; color, in its richest and deepest harmony, and light in its most tender inflections are equally at his call, for the art of lithography

offers greater variety than many mediums which are more favored by modern artists. All that etching gives of suggestiveness the stone will give, and while it does not perhaps reach the organic power and force of color of which an etched plate is capable, it certainly does not fall far behind it. Calame, who was as expert a lithographer in crayon as ever lived, and who was also an etcher of masterly skill, abandoned the latter art for the former, because he could secure by lithography effects denied him by the aqua-fortis. Our own Thomas Moran, on the other hand, who at one time executed some lithographic landscapes which are now priceless prizes of the print collector, has superseded the crayon with the etching needle. But Mr. Moran relinquished lithography because, by the copper plate he could obtain all that he cared to have in his designs with greater individuality of execution, and not because lithography was incapable of serving him in its place.

The foundation upon which the artist in crayon relies for his effects on the stone is the mechanical preparation of the surface itself. For large, bold and vigorous effects, the surface may be levelled or grained, as it is technically termed, with coarser sand than the smaller and more delicate designs demand. The graining, while apparently a simple process enough, still calls for a certain amount of skill on the part of the laborer who performs it. The stone is set on a table with a trough top. Sand is strewn over it, and moistened with water. Then the stone grinder, with another and harder stone than that to be drawn upon, works over and over the surface, adding more sand and more water until he has produced, by the attrition of the grains of sand, a level and granulated face to the stone. This face must be free from scratches and even in its grain, whether the latter be coarse or fine. The grain must also have sufficient depth to allow the crayon its play upon the surface, without clogging in the space between the raised points of the stone.

I have seen remarkably harmonious effects produced on a stone of varying grain. This is to say, for instance, that the portion intended for a sky was grained somewhat finer than that intended for the landscape. The same process has been applied to figure compositions, giving especial softness to the faces and leaving the grain for the figures of a bolder and stronger cast. Some of the harder lithographic stones have been given an excellent and even crayon grain, with modulations from coarse to fine, by the sand blast. Zinc plates, which for artistic purposes may be utilized in the place of stone, have also been prepared under the sand blast. The great difficulty formerly with graining zinc for crayon work was that an even grain was hard to procure, and that the drawing etched unevenly in consequence, and also of the liability of the plate to scratches. The sand blast now secures the necessary symmetry and precision, and amateurs experimenting in lithographic effects will find it sometimes convenient to resort to the lighter, cheaper, and more easily transported zinc plates whose drawing may, if necessary, be transferred to stone for printing. Many lithographic establishments, I may here remark, avoid the cost and bulkiness of storage required for stones by having those designs which they are compelled to preserve made on zinc and printed from transfers. Zinc is also extensively used for making tint plates in chromo-lithography.

However, while zinc is available for bold and free effects, the more subtle and delicate finish of which stone is capable is denied it. In certain directions it is a convenient makeshift. A substitute it will never actually be.

The crayon used in drawing upon stone varies in its degrees of hardness, like lead pencils. Its greasy composition gives it a tenderer feeling in the fingers than the hard crayon used in drawing on paper, but in a general way its method of use is about the same. Soft effects with a hard crayon and strong effects with a soft one are the programme. To reinforce the deep and rich effects of the softest crayon the lithographer has also an ink composed of the same substance as the crayon, with which solid blacks may be laid on with the brush and dark masses accented with touches of brush or pen. While the crayon only blackens the surface of the grain, leaving the hollows between it untouched, the ink fills hollows and covers surface grain also, and so produces an even mass of color. Variations of the inky mass itself may be produced by scraping the surface of the grain with a steel scraper, and white lines, spots and masses may be scraped from broad planes of ink or crayon by the same implement.

Experts in lithography frequently use for large and bold effects a large crayon with which they can cover extensive surfaces of stone with a tint of varying intensity that it might be tedious to work up to with the small point. This rubbing crayon is, of course, only the ordinary softer crayon moulded into a large bar. With ink to produce the dead blacks and a scraper to secure the half tints and high lights, results of great artistic beauty and strength are obtained. Sometimes from stones covered with ink, the scraper is made to produce powerful and brilliant effects, but this is a feat reserved for only the most expert and certain hands. The ink and the rubbing crayon find their most extensive employment in the production of tint stones or color stones for chromatic prints. Much of the color work in the artistic supplements to *The Art Amateur* is made with the ink brush and the rubbing crayon, but the actual drawing and detail of the pictures depend upon the pencil-pointed crayon itself.

The fundamental processes of lithography have already been sketched in these pages. It is worth adding to them, however, if only as a warning, that corrections of a design on a grained stone are virtually impossible. Amateurs expert at rapid pencil sketching may apply the same skill to crayon drawing on stone, but where positive accuracy is required, as in figure subjects or portraits, a drawing on paper should be prepared first. This may then be traced with red chalk upon the surface of the stone, thus affording the artist an outline as a guide. As all drawings on stone naturally print reversed, the use of a tracing in reversing a drawing which it is desired to have printed in the same face as the original will be manifest. The paper to transfer the design may be prepared by any one by scraping a powder of dry, hard red chalk on a sheet of paper and rubbing it to an even surface. This being placed face down on the stone, any lines indented over it with a hard pencil, or a blunt steel point called a tracing needle, will be found clearly marked in red on the grain of the stone.

In the same fashion, the sketcher upon stone may, if he chooses, fix the masses and proportions of his composition when he has a free-hand drawing in contemplation. As grease alone affects the lithographic stone, the red chalk lines wash off when the drawing is etched for printing. It is well to bear in mind that a touch of a finger, or a fragment of crayon dropped on the stone may lead to a smudge or blot, and so one must take care to preserve the purity of the surface. The point to observe is that every touch of the crayon will tell, and that while it is possible at times to correct a mistake, it is always a difficult operation and rarely fails to leave some trace of itself. When it comes to elaborate and carefully finished designs, they call for an almost plodding method and a care that verges on the tiresome, but these would hardly fall within the limits of an amateur's lithographic experiments. The beauty of the effects and the rapid and spirited possibilities of the execution of the lithographic drawing are what invite the artist and the amateur to it, not its merely mechanical elegancies of finish and of finality, which properly belong to the trade branch of the art.

Crayons, ink and all the other requirements of lithography may be procured from the artists' material stores. Stones grained to any degree of fineness required may also be ordered. The French crayons preserve the evenest grade and the French ink is of the most fluent and even quality. The German ink and crayons are also good. The crayon, it may be of interest to know, is a combination of white wax (3 parts), hard soap (2 parts), shellac (1 part), drops of mastic ($\frac{1}{2}$ part), tallow

(1 part), old lard ($\frac{1}{4}$ part), Venetian turpentine ($\frac{1}{4}$ part), Brunswick black ($\frac{1}{4}$ part), carbonate of soda ($\frac{1}{4}$ part), Paris black ($1\frac{1}{2}$ part). This concoction is melted into perfect fluidity and run into sticks, in molds like short sections of lead pencils, to harden. It is used in a porte-crayon and in sharpening is cut in from the point, reversing the method of sharpening a lead pencil to prevent its breaking. The ink has 2 parts of white wax, 2 shellac, 1 hard soap, $\frac{1}{2}$ tallow, $\frac{1}{4}$ carbonated soda and 1 of Paris black, or sometimes powdered lampblack, though the latter is not as good. This makes a somewhat thick but perfectly free flowing ink, every line of which tells, and is used with a steel pen, or for broad effects with a camel's-hair or sable brush. The same materials that are applied to drawing on stone are used in drawing on zinc, though the final preparation of a zinc plate is slightly different. The mixture used to fix a drawing on stone after it is finished is of nitric acid, 2 parts, to from 40 to 60 parts of gum-arabic in solution, according to the delicacy of the drawing and the softness of the stone. It is floated over the surface so as to cover it entirely, and allowed to dry sufficiently to fix the picture, when it is washed off with clear water and a soft sponge and the stone is ready for the press.

There are stones and stones. The grades are generally distinguished by colors. For fine crayon work, the pearl gray is the best, though for large and free work, the softer, yellowish colored, which take a large, open grain, adapt themselves. Lithographic stones are sold by the pound, and a small extra charge is made for graining them. I have myself often used the softest and meanest cheaper grades of stone, even those from Kentucky, successfully, when effect and dash rather than mere finish was called for. With a good grain to work on and a sure hand to work on it, the stone itself may be made to perform wonders. ALFRED TRUMBLE.

A NEW MARKET FOR IDEAS.



At the present time, when talented young artists and gifted amateurs are producing in this country much in the way of original and applied design for which they have no outlet in a profitable direction, the great lithographic houses, which are constantly under the call of various advertising businesses, appear to be on the search for just what it would seem these very designers

could provide. The call for novelties in advertising designs is incessant. Even the butcher, the baker and the candlestick-maker resort to the lithographer for his aid in the expansion of their businesses. The lithographers' agents scour the studios for subjects, and still the cry goes up for more.

Painters of ability and even of eminence, to say nothing of well-known designers for the periodical press, contribute to the advertising pages of dailies, weeklies, monthlies, of trade papers, circulars and broadsheets, strictly in the interests of some trade or other, which can afford to pay so well for the work that the temptation to undertake it is irresistible.

The time was never more auspicious than at present for young men and women who can adapt their artistic abilities to the use of the advertising public. Even when they may not have acquired a perfect technical skill, their ideas would find a market. Clever technicians can always be hired to adapt the ideas of others, but such people, working in a groove, generally lack originality of invention themselves. Artists are abundant enough, but they are rarely practical men who can compass the commercial calls of the hour. "Give us ideas!" cry the advertisers and their agents. "We want ideas for cash!"

The tobacco trade in all of its branches, the patent medicine, food and other advertisers of this class, the wholesale merchant and the retail tradesman, the very press itself, are ravenous for original and novel methods of making themselves conspicuous before the public.

The publications of the day show clearly enough who are the great pictorial advertisers and what the trades are in which there is a call for artistic skill and invention. The advertisers of a more costly and pretentious order are also well known. Sketches of ideas likely to be of use to these would be certain of a hearty acceptance.